

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE BROWN COUNTY  
VETERANS' RECOGNITION SUBCOMMITTEE**

Pursuant to Section 19.84, Wis. Stats., a regular meeting of the **Brown County Veterans' Recognition Subcommittee** was held on Tuesday, September 18, 2012 at 5:00 p.m., in Room 201 of the Northern Building, 305 E. Walnut Street, Green Bay, Wisconsin.

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**PRESENT:** Rosemary Desisles, Jim Haskins, Duane Pierce, Donald Bettine, Jerry Polus, John Walschinski

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**\*\*Running Total of Veterans' Certificates: 1383**

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**1. Call Meeting to Order.**

The meeting was called to order by CVSO Jerry Polus at 5:30 p.m.

**2. Invocation by Jim Haskins.**

**3. Approve/Modify Agenda.**

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY DONALD BETTINE, SECONDED BY JIM HASKINS TO APPROVE THE AGENDA. VOTE TAKEN. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**4. Approve/Modify Minutes of August 31, 2012.**

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY DUANE PIERCE, SECONDED BY DONALD BETTINE TO APPROVE THE MINUTES. VOTE TAKEN. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**5. OK to pay bills.**

No bills to pay.

**6. Evaluation of Military Appreciation Day at Brown County Fair.**

CVSO Jerry Polus asked for feedback on the Military Appreciation Day held at the Brown County Fair in August. He felt this was the best event they have had and attendance was estimated at 200 – 250. In addition, 118 new veterans' certificates were requested. Suggestions Polus had received following the event included identifying veterans with colored wristbands, however, after discussing this it was decided that this would not have much merit. Duane Pierce reported that one of the admission gates was not aware that it was Military Appreciation Day; however, this was a simple understanding that was cleared up right away.

Polus felt one of the things that should be considered for next year is having some sort of banner identifying the tent and the event that would be visible from the midway. He got the banner they had used previously from his office and noted that there was a spelling error on the banner. John Walschinski took the banner home with him and stated that he would work on getting the spelling error fixed so the banner could be used next year. The other thing Polus would like to look into for next year is some sort of table covering for the tables staffed by his office.

Jim Haskins was upset that despite his personal pre-Fair visits to area television stations, none of them showed up at the event. He sent a letter to the stations that he shared with the Subcommittee. He stated that he did receive a response to his letter from Fox 11 who stated they were not trying to snub veterans in any way but they could not cover every event that takes place, although they would add it to their list for next year.

John Walschinski attended the event and said when people were signing up for certificates the placement of the flags at the entrance to the tent seemed to interfere a little bit with people getting to the table and they will look at this a little more closely next year.

Duane Pierce reported that he circulated through the attendees and the feedback he received was very positive and veterans really liked the displays and the band and would like to see the same thing next year. He also stated that Ed Koslowski will be having a follow-up meeting and Pierce will report back to this Subcommittee after that meeting is held. He did hear several comments that the adjacent band that played during the day was a little bit too loud and perhaps next year the tent could be a little further away from the stage. Pierce also said the table service was well received and he will ask Rolling Thunder to come back next year.

Polus felt the layout of the tent worked very well and the joint effort with the Meet and Greet Group also worked very well. He thanked the Subcommittee for their hard work in making this event such a success and he also thanked the Fair Board for including the event in their advertising and for all the other help they provided.

#### **7. Promoting Veterans' Day among employers and businesses.**

Polus provided the list of area businesses that offer special discounts and deals in honor of Veterans' Day so that members could confirm the deals and discounts prior to Veterans' Day. Polus continued that the Veterans' Day Ceremony at the Brown County Arena will be held on Sunday, November 11, 2012 at 10:30 a.m. Further the ceremony at the Duck Creek VFW will be held on Friday, November 9. The ceremony at the Yacht Club is scheduled for Saturday, November 10.

The next meeting of this Subcommittee will be held on the regular date of Tuesday, October 16, 2012, but the November meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 7, 2012 so that any last minute plans for Veterans' Day can be discussed.

#### **8. Report from CVSO Jerry Polus.**

Polus reported that the Green Bay VA Clinic is moving along and they hope to take over the keys in May or June and start seeing patients in July or August. A Clinic Director has been hired who has been a long-time VA employee who has worked in Appleton as well as in Milwaukee. They will be bringing up equipment and a team of employees next month. Polus indicated that they are doing a small amount of hiring but this will increase in late winter and early spring. The best way to apply for a job at this time is to go to the Milwaukee VA Medical Center website and click on jobs for a listing of available positions.

Polus explained that veterans in Brown County will be among the first to have the opportunity to schedule appointments in Green Bay and will be notified of the procedure to follow by letter. He noted that for the last two years the VA has given residents approval to see their regular physicians and have it billed to the VA and patients under this program will be the first people to receive appointments at the new clinic. The next group will be those people who go to VA Clinics other than the Green Bay clinic and wish to transfer. All patients will be notified of their options.

Polus also reported on Veterans Court and stated that this is going well and they currently have six vets in the program and also have five or six more they hope to bring in soon. They have hired an outreach coordinator which is a key position and an important part of the Veterans Court program. Court is held on Friday afternoons at 3:00

p.m. Polus also reported that Sheboygan County's judicial district is also ready to start their Veterans Courts.

Polus concluded his report by talking about Honor Flights and he said that one is going this month and another will be heading out next month. He also stated that there have been discussions about looking at Honor Flights for Korean Veterans, but there is nothing formal on this at this time.

**9. Report from Committee Members Present (Bettine, Desisles, Haskins, Maino, Ness, Pierce, Steenbock, Walschinski & Witkowski).**

-Jim Haskins shared that the VA in Milwaukee now offers valet parking. He also stated the IHop Restaurant near the Clinic gave him a discount on his meal, although, he does not know if this is done elsewhere. He also reported that he had read recently in Forbes Magazine that Hertz has provided 40,000 rental cars to troops returning from the Middle East. He also reported that he read that 25% of Amazon's new employees are ex-military and they are ranked number one in 2012 for the top 100 military friendly employers in the country. Haskins concluded his report by saying that the City Stadium Run for Veterans which was held on September 8 was well attended by 614 people. The proceeds from the event will be given to the Wounded Warriors amputee softball team.

-Donald Bettine reported that he had attended a meeting of the Fox Valley Veterans Council recently and he shared a brochure with the group which said that the goals of the group are to promote the goals and objections of all veterans' organizations for the common good and welfare of active and veteran personnel of all uniformed services as well as their dependents and survivors and to foster support of the exchange of information and ideas among all veterans organizations in order to provide better service to veterans and their families. Polus stated that this organization is similar to the United Patriotic Society and has been in existence for several years.

Bettine also reported that the Courts have ruled against the Stolen Valor Act because it constitutes a violation of free speech. This would make it okay for someone to lie about military service. Pierce noted that they are in the process of putting through a revised edition of the Act that has been reworded to say that if a person lies about military service for financial gain they can be prosecuted.

-John Walschinski shared that his grandson recently stopped to say goodbye as he will be heading to Shaw Air Force Base in South Carolina and then to Afghanistan. He also reported on the Veterans Memorial in Howard and said that the final design is being tweaked a little bit but the main design of the pillars is nearly set. They will be almost 30' tall and between each of the pillars will be a section designated for each branch of service. He also stated that the name of the memorial will be the Northeastern Wisconsin Veterans' Memorial rather than the Howard Veterans' Memorial. The estimated cost of the project is \$350,000 - \$500,000 and they have a professional fundraiser to help raise money.

-Duane Pierce stated that this Friday, September 21, 2012 is POW/MIA Day and a candlelight ceremony will be held at 7:00 p.m. at the POW/MIA flagpole outside the Brown County Courthouse. Pierce also reported that every other month an event is held at Pearly Gates to show their appreciation for the work they do on the bike ride and the next time they do this will be October 1 and he invited anyone interested to attend. They have \$1.50 burgers and raffle prizes. Pierce also shared an e mail he received regarding the President wanting to increase medical insurance for veterans, military

retirees and their families to a point where it would force them to get Obamacare; however, this will not apply to the Civil Defense employees.

-Rosemary Desisles reported that she had been contacted by Mike Egen to help organize a committee in Northeast Wisconsin called the Community Blue Print Team which would be an outreach committee that will provide a way to develop a matrix of service providers including a mentoring group, employment team, outreach team and education team for veterans. She will provide more information on this after she has an opportunity to attend a meeting. A discussion followed and it was felt that although this was a good idea, it may be a duplication of efforts provided by other organizations

**10. Such other Matters as Authorized by Law.**

*None.*

**11. Adjourn.**

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY JIM HASKINS, SECONDED BY ROSEMARY DESISLES TO ADJOURN AT 5:57 P.M. VOTE TAKEN. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

Respectfully submitted,

Therese Giannunzio  
Recording Secretary